

## **COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**August 1, 2006**

**Upon Recess of BMA**

Mayor Guinta called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll. There were eleven Aldermen present.

Present: Aldermen Roy, Gatsas, Long, Duval, Osborne, Pinard, O'Neil,  
Lopez, Shea, DeVries, Forest

Absent: Aldermen Garrity, Smith, Thibault

Messrs.: Kevin Clougherty, Ron Ludwig, Robert MacKenzie

Mayor Guinta addressed item 3 of the agenda:

**3. Bond Resolutions:**

“Authorizing Bonds, Notes or Lease Purchases in the amount of One Million Seven Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$1,750,000) for the 2007 CIP 511307, JFK Coliseum Rehabilitation Project.”

“Authorizing Bonds, Notes or Lease Purchases in the amount of Four Million Dollars (\$4,000,000) for the 2007 CIP 712407, Cohas Phase 2 – Contract 2 Project.”

On motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Shea, it was voted to read the Bond Resolutions by titles only, and it was so done.

Alderman O'Neil stated I spoke to Chairman Garrity about the first item...the JFK...I just have no memory of any discussion about that. The last I remember we had a discussion about the need to repair the refrigeration for the ice and I know the Facilities Division of Public Works got involved with Parks on it. I don't know if there was any resolution to that but I think this is even over and above that and I do recall a year or so ago there was some discussion about the possibility that JFK ice could be moved to another location, the School District had some interest in building a new school on that site and in my discussion with Alderman Garrity about this he recommended we send it to committee to discuss. Because it was part of the Enterprise we didn't have a thorough discussion in the

budget process about it but I think moving ahead with this could cause some problems with some other thoughts. There might be discussions that might be going on and I think we need to have those discussions and also get a clarification of what the \$1.7 is for.

Mayor Guinta stated I would entertain a motion to re-refer.

Alderman O'Neil moved to refer the bond resolution relative to the JFK to the Committee on CIP. Alderman Duval duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Shea stated I drove by the JFK and I thought that they were doing some work there...they haven't started it. I know that there was some discussion I thought that one of the commissioners had...I thought it was you, your Honor...concerning JFK...I'm not sure.

Mayor Guinta stated there's been some discussion about whether and there's a lot of things that have been on the table. Nothing has been determined but basically the decision is whether we repair JFK as is which would be such as the expansion of the locker rooms and I think some of the exterior portion of the building. There's a secondary, I think, idea not necessarily a proposal about do we just start from scratch...build one sheet, build two sheets, build it somewhere else because of the expressed interest for a potential field at that location. Nothing has been decided but we had to move forward at least with some sort of a placeholder to fund because something does need to be done...structurally...it's a 40-year old facility. There really has not had any major repair or maintenance other than the basis. So, something has to be addressed which is why I would support Alderman O'Neil recommendation to re-refer. We can have that more formal discussion and get the full recommendation from Parks.

Alderman Shea stated may I ask how it happened to get on the agenda. Who put it on there?

Mayor Guinta stated we've got to act on these things one way or the other.

Alderman Shea asked who decided that we would discuss it this evening?

Mayor Guinta stated I approved the agenda.

Alderman Shea stated if someone had to come and...I guess, Kevin.

Mayor Guinta stated it's a CIP authorization so it's got to come to the Board.

Mr. Robert MacKenzie, Director of Planning, stated it was part of the approved '07 CIP and we had some of the bond issues previously that had to get started but a couple of projects did not require immediate action last month. So, our staff subsequently put it on the agenda.

Alderman Shea stated it was approved by CIP in the '07 budget.

Mr. MacKenzie stated yes.

Alderman Shea stated so that's how it happened to get here. So, now we want to reconsider it because the CIP Committee didn't know it was...

Mayor Guinta stated I think at the time...there really hasn't been a full and complete recommendation from the CIP Committee as I understand from my conversations with Alderman Garrity about what direction the City should be going. Whether it's repair and improve it or a completely different approach whether it's one sheet or two sheets at that location or a different locations. So, that I think does need probably further review at committee. Is that fair to say, Alderman O'Neil because the committee isn't comfortable making a recommendation.

Alderman Shea stated I have no objection to that. I'm just saying that apparently there was approval of this when the CIP budget was adopted...that's how it happened to come here. Now of course if we want to reconsider it that's fine but I think that there was a rationale for it being on.

Mayor Guinta stated the rationale was that money has to be appropriated because something needs to be done with the facility.

Alderman Lopez stated I sort of go along the same line of Alderman Shea to a degree because here's a process and we're assuming or saying okay the Highway Department's going to go find 14 acres, we're going to put two sheets of ice over there...I do remember a discussion with Parks and Recreation, I do remember a discussion with the Commission moving forward here. What I would like to know from the Parks Director is is there going to be a hold up here. On the assumption that we're going to do something when I can tell you that for a whole year people have said that the School Department's going to go and move to the JFK Coliseum, it's going to be torn down, it's going to be over at the Highway Department, the Highway Department is going to go to East Industrial Park Drive and now they're going to go here, they're going to go there...and nothing is being done and so we're going to hold up a project. I totally disagree with having two sheets of ice at the Highway Department or anyplace else in the City.

Mayor Guinta stated no decisions have been made about one sheet, two sheets... there's just been general discussion and general ideas submitted. But, just regarding the issue about schools I have asked the Superintendent to give me enrollment projections for the next ten years also to include where the administration believes the greatest increases in enrollment would be so this Board can then start to look at what we need to do for school building facilities. It's something that the School Committee or the administration has been very lax in in the past. Prior to Bill Sanders departure I talked with him, I sat down with him about getting that to us before the beginning of the school year. With his departure I now will have that discussion with Karen DeFrancis but I have at least asked Mike Ludwell to give us the enrollment projections so that this Board can take a look at questions and it's one thing to say let's have a school there but we need to have some basis of fact in order for this Board to make some decisions.

Alderman Lopez stated we've also asked the School Department for any plans of moving the building and everything else that goes along to include the plans for West High School and stuff like that. I would like to still have the Director come up here and tell me that there is no problem in waiting and if the issue of the JFK Coliseum is going to fall down and end then at that point we were going to put money into it and I believe this money...is this Enterprise money? So, Enterprise money...so if the Director, with permission for him to come up here, so we can get an answer for what is the status of this...if we're going to hold this up on the assumption that something's going to happen tomorrow.

Alderman Osborne stated I've been after this for a little while when I first became Alderman again. As far as another school where it's costing us about \$225,000 or \$235,000 over at Easter Seals every year for that and I always said that that would probably mean a \$2 or \$2.5 million bond. I said this a long time ago to Dr. Bass and others saying we should do something here. Instead of paying rent we should have our own there and this would probably be the ideal situation. So, this is why it's going to committee so we can ask some questions and go through this with a fine tooth comb and take it from there. I don't think we can do it all tonight.

Mayor Guinta stated it would be nice if they listened to the Board and to the Aldermen.

Mr. Kevin Clougherty, Finance Officer, stated just as a procedural point of reference. I want to remind the Board that tonight these bonds are just being introduced and it's not a final approval. So, by taking action tonight you're still

going to have to take an action in two weeks. So, with the action tonight you're still going to have time or a month at the next Board meeting will have time. Just so it's clear this isn't the final approval of these bonds tonight it's just the introduction of them.

Alderman O'Neil stated Alderman Lopez is absolutely right. Some of the discussions centered around Highway moving and moving sheets of ice over to that existing location but even if Highway doesn't move I think as big an issue is does schools need that site to replace, add onto Beech Street...I'm not even really sure what their plan is and that's why I think before we spend almost \$2 million and in a year from now somebody's come in saying oh, by the way we want to move JFK because we want to build an elementary school to replace Beech Street and Wilson and maybe take care of Easter Seals. At one time I thought they had talked about moving the School Administration building there as well. Am I correct that it is now going to MST...so, there's a lot of unknowns here...the School District is part of this...but, before we commit \$1.7 million to do repairs to JFK I want to make sure that we know what the plan is.

Mayor Guinta stated let's get a quick update from Ron regarding the...I guess you're looking for an update on the structural integrity of the building and whether this would be a delay.

Alderman Lopez stated the official position of the Parks and Recreation in reference to the JFK Coliseum as it is today and what their intentions are. If they want to tear it down then say so or either keep it.

Mr. Ron Ludwig, Director of Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries, stated well I think we can't work from speculation in terms of what this Board is doing because it doesn't sound like it really has its arms around what it's doing right now, so I'll start by saying that. However, we can tell you that you have a 40-year floor with a 20-year life...we've effectively got twice the life of any floor that any hockey arena has at this point. You should typically start the rink up at the end of August...no, I should say we start it up a little early given the fact that we know that more than likely we're going to have leaks in the floor. We no longer have leaks in just in the header trench piping, we have leaks in the floor itself which are difficult to find. It's like anything else...it's 40 years old. If we find one leak we jackhammer it, we get lucky...it's 11 miles of piping under the floor...if we get lucky we find that leak and we fix it. If we get unlucky, have more leaks, we continue to jackhammer until we fix it. So, we could fix it in November, we could fix it in two weeks, we could fix it in two months. But, we're here to tell you that the floor is old and it needs to be replaced. If it's the will of this Board to say that we move toward two sheets of ice at a facility I think that that could be the more

cost-effective way but they're actually talking about a huge appropriation of dollars at that point too. The Kalwall panels as we call them around the perimeter of the JFK and at the east and west ends of the JFK are pretty much completely rotted...birds coming through frequently until we patch them and that's the majority of the \$1.7 million is the floor and the Kalwall panels to fix the building. Structurally, it's not going to fall down. The arches are in good shape, we've put about \$175,000 into arch repair about four or five years ago of Enterprise money. So, it's not going to fall down, the roof is decent but without a sheet of ice it's difficult to play hockey so we're here to tell you that this is what we're dealing with. It's not going to give you another three years I can tell you that maybe with a patch another year.

Alderman Lopez stated I agree with the Superintendent and I also agree with the Finance Officer this being the first thing. I don't mind it going to committee but I just don't want and I'd appreciate it if the committee would look at it very carefully and not go on speculation that's something's going to happen. All these projects are out there that everybody's saying that they want done. I haven't seen one plan in one year since people said that they were going to do something. So, we need to get a firm commitment from the School Department. Now that the Weston Fire Station's down maybe they want to go up there. So, we just don't have the answers. But, let's get the answers but let's not hold up something on speculation.

Alderman Shea stated for the kids that play hockey are they going to be able to play hockey if no money is spent to repair the sheet of ice?

Mr. Ludwig replied they could very well play hockey, however, I could be coming to you in mid-September and saying the season's going to be delayed by two or three months because of this and we'll be dealing with the fallout then. I'm telling you we are on the threshold...we're very close, we could start up in September and we could be good for another nine months.

Alderman Shea asked how long would it take to repair the sheet of ice. If CIP meetings next month or sometime like that or in a couple of weeks do they need \$40,000 for the sheet of ice or do they need \$100,000?

Mr. Ludwig replied at this time now it's moot. What we're looking at is putting the project out to bid probably by the end of next March. So, we're already living in the danger zone this year. I could be here in October and telling you that we have to delay the season.

Alderman Shea asked what would happen if you delayed the season?

Mr. Ludwig replied we'd move kids around to the west side and they'd have to understand.

Alderman Shea stated it's a pretty big operation...the Flames and so forth...anybody that contributes money to that. If you're not involved in the process you don't realize how much things evolve here.

Alderman DeVries stated I just heard what I was waiting for...the time sensitive piece of this project moving forward. You're saying that this is not going to be corrected no matter what we do for this season. We're in the danger zone and we hope and keep our fingers crossed and hope that you get a full 9-month season. You are looking to go out to bid next March so it is reasonable that the CIP Committee members get a better look at what you have intended for the project...do you have any sort of schematics and come back to this Board without jeopardizing that fund. Fabulous!

Alderman O'Neil stated that's something that I think is important. Whether we acted on this tonight the plan is it's not going to get repaired till next March or later so sending this to committee and trying to get some clarification on what's going on here but more importantly what are the plans for the School District, etc. I think is the prudent thing for us to do over the next month.

Alderman Gatsas asked what happens if you can't open the ice in September? What's the loss in revenue?

Mr. Ludwig replied I think probably about \$100,000, \$120,000 from hockey.

Alderman Gatsas asked what does that do to your Enterprise fund?

Mr. Ludwig replied puts it in a bigger hole than it already is.

Alderman Gatsas stated so in September if you need a patch job that patch job from what I heard you say could run you from dollar one to \$100,000.

Mr. Ludwig stated I don't think it would be a hundred but it's more time sensitive and if the ice comes out we have to melt it down, we have to cut the floor because when we start jackhammering in there it's like jackhammering nitroglycerin...it could be all mush at that point. Still, I'm not here to cry wolf I'm just here to do my job and tell you that the floor is old. We have had...I think after the last

meeting I think it was Alderman O'Neil who asked that Facilities come in and Tim Clougherty has had people come in...I don't know if they had special testing equipment or not but I'm sure that Tim has some kind of report to give the Board as well.

Alderman Lopez asked are we going to approve the bond resolutions?

Mayor Guinta stated I think that's correct...the motion is to re-refer the bond resolution regarding the JFK Coliseum to the Committee on CIP for discussion.

Alderman Lopez stated according to Kevin we're just at the first stage so if we approve it and still send it back to committee we still have an opportunity to look at it, am I correct, Kevin?

Mr. Clougherty replied if you vote on it tonight it's laid on the table and it's going to take a second vote to approve it. If you choose to refer it to a committee and not approve it it will have to be reintroduced at a subsequent regular Board meeting and then it will layover to be approved at a second meeting.

Alderman Lopez stated that's the point I wanted to make...if we can approve the bond resolution plus send it to committee then we're saving time.

Mayor Guinta asked do you want to amend the motion.

Alderman O'Neil replied that's fine but it may take more than one committee meeting...that's okay.

Mayor Guinta stated you're saving on the back end.

Alderman O'Neil stated that's fine and moved to amend the motion recommending the bond resolutions ought to pass and layover and refer the bond resolution relative to the JFK Coliseum to the Committee on CIP. Alderman Duval duly seconded the motion. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Alderman O'Neil stated just on that point...the School Board...is there anything you can do to get, to push this issue we're trying to get some information.

Mayor Guinta replied Alderman O'Neil I try and I try and I try again. I have requested the information from the Superintendent, I believe I have some preliminary enrollment projections, I'm still waiting for the analysis on building demands and I will reiterate that to the Superintendent.



Alderman O'Neil moved to request of the School District information previously requested by the Mayor regarding the complete enrollment information and recommendations regarding building facilities and sites be provided to the Mayor and Board of Aldermen prior to the September 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board.

Alderman Shea stated I would like to put something into your mind...the OLPH property is available for \$1.9 million. We did have a meeting at St. Anthony's with the parishioners and the realtors and I did contact School Committee Member Beaudry who was supposed to review with Mr. Sanders the interior. But as Alderman Osborne has brought out we pay heavy rent to Easter Seals...they're excluding the kids next year I believe because they're moving out...for \$1.9 million you can have a school and then there's 3.2 acres of land there. If they don't want to go into that kind of a scenario I don't know what they want to do because they can do that and they can have facilities for any kind of parking availability...it's been a school before that. So, I'm not sure if they move slowly over there but let's face it other people in the City are interested in purchasing the land and if they don't move quickly somebody else is going to put the money in and the Diocese is going to say fine so I think that's an ideal place and the people in that vicinity certainly are conducive to having a school population there because they're used to it being a school and where the need exists they can relieve some of the pressure for the pre-schoolers as well as if they renovate a little bit more in the schools for any overflow at the first and second grade levels at Wilson or at Beech. So, it's an ideal situation, which they shouldn't overlook. Maybe you could kind of move it a little bit, I don't know. It's kind of up to you to kind of keep them.

Mayor Guinta stated I'm trying.

Alderman Lopez stated I think the last time we made a motion that School Board members said down there we don't have to listen to them but I was wondering if we could come up with some definite subjects...land, new school, new administration and whatever else...if we couldn't have a joint meeting with the School Board or Lands and Buildings and the Buildings and Sites Committee or something. We need to address the problems so that we understand...the Aldermen need to know which way to go for the City as a planning aspect.

Mayor Guinta stated I agree. I have reiterated this numerous times that for planning purposes and the way that...the fact that this Board has to approve the bonding, they need to have a long-term plan reviewed and submitted to us. The letter is going to reiterate that, I will reiterate it and at the appropriate time I think a joint session would make sense.

Alderman Lopez duly seconded the motion. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Resolution:

“Amending the FY2007 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Nine Thousand Three Hundred Seventy Five Dollars (\$9,375) for FY2007 CIP 412107 Public Health Preparedness & Bioterrorism Response Program.”

On motion of Alderman O’Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Pinard, it was voted that the Resolution be read by title only, and it was so done.

Alderman Osborne moved that the resolution ought to pass and be enrolled. Alderman DeVries duly seconded the motion. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

2007 CIP Budget Authorization:

412107 Public Health Preparedness & Bioterrorism Response - OSHA

Alderman Osborne moved that the CIP budget authorization be approved, subject to final adoption of the related resolution. Alderman DeVries duly seconded the motion, there being none opposed, the motion carried.

Alderman Lopez asked did we approve the \$4 million bond resolution?

Mayor Guinta replied yes we did.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman DeVries, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee